

poor woman would seem to have provided for your personal welfare as well."

It was McGloynne who, five minutes later, brought them back to the question of the making of that will. "But why should she have made it at all?" he demanded. "That's the question to be settled now!"

"It is," said Glasbury; "it is! It wasn't by chance she made that will. I realize more and more, from things she said—" "You're quite right," said the Judge. "Laneham, do I tell them at once? God knows—"

"Better not. It'll come out soon enough. Glasbury, if you'll finish your story now, we'll hear the man below."

So Glasbury finished:

"There's little more to tell. For the death of Hooley I blame myself as if I had done it myself. There is only this to say: The two devils themselves had not really intended murder. Till that last night they believed the pearls were still there within their reach, that they alone knew where they were, and that three minutes at the little safe might turn the trick. It was the Italian who killed Hooley. When the game was up—when they couldn't get the pearls—it was he who had the idea of making me pay instead. And had I been anything but the most miserable coward at the beginning—"

"We can gain little from vain regrets," said Laneham. "McGloynne, shall we have up Horsley?"

"Right away."

THE big Inspector called down from the landing. Next moment Horsley, the jewel thief who had been ready to tell his story, was, with his escort, on the stairs.

They were on the stairs, and they reached the landing. But at the topmost stair he suddenly wheeled. In some way he managed to get one of his hands free. He was a big and powerful man. His bandaged shoulder seemed to trouble him but little. And with one backward thrust he sent the patrolman on his right headlong down. Then he swung the chain and manacle like a sling, and brought it home across the face of the second policeman, laying him open from lip to ear. And with a terrific lunge he dove straight for the landing window.

The fact that he had to do everything with one hand lost him perhaps two seconds. It was little Jimmy who stopped him. He caught him by his foot as he went through, and was dragged after him; but he still held on. They went down together in the deep snow of Laneham's garden. And there, battered but unspeaking, Jimmy got a better grip on the man. He was still holding on when McGloynne and the others burst in through the gate.

"S all right, frien's, 's all right!" Horsley greeted them. "That's all I was savin' up. No harm done, any more than I've been hurted myself. An' now, if you want, I'll talk till fare-you-well!"

"There's not a whole lot you can tell us," said Laneham.

"But, by-y gee," said McGloynne, "he's goin' to tell us that!"

"In the first place, to go back to the beginning with you," the Doctor asked, when they were back in the room, "what part did Maddalina play in it?"

"A good fat part, considerin' she was a skirt an' all. She went to Mrs. Fisher's only because we'd heard about them drops o' milk. Her and Lotufo—that's my guinea friend—they always been strong pals; so she was put in to make the inside lay. An' one thing she learned right away, an' that was that there was a chanst for a double lift. She got onto it that Mrs. Fisher was in the habit, the first of every month or so, of havin' one of them big blue envelopes full of yella-backs waitin' on the premises for your friend Willin's here. An' when we were fixin' for the pearls there didn't seem to be no good reason why we shouldn't have Maddalina make her getaway with the money. Only a matter of timin' the job right."

"Yes," said McGloynne; "you timed it right! But how did you know you could get in through Glasbury's rooms?"

"Maddalina again. If she was keen enough to find where that little safe was

planted, you can bet she wasn't believin' long in any spooks causin' them voices. An' one afternoon Lotufo decided to lay up in Glasbury's dump an' see for himself. He seen, all right. How did he get in first? With a key. An' where did he get it? Sho, what's a key? Any one can fix up for a key! The thing I'm tellin' you is that he found out about that door. An' after that it was only an argyment as to when. That was for Maddalina to tip us to.

"An' she tipped us wrong. She'd got the idea that Mrs. Fisher was goin' to be out that afternoon. She'd heard her 'phonin' Mr. Willin's; an', as Maddalina got it, the money was to be there for him, but she, Mrs. Fisher, would be temp'rily away. That'd mean that Glasbury wouldn't be there, neither. An', as it was Jimmy's day off on top of it, what more would anybody want for an open door?"

"All right. Come to the day itself, an' us. But, mind you,—an' I'm tellin' you straight,—I wasn't in that part of it no more'n to be adviser. Lotufo, he was the only one of us was ever in them Fisher rooms. It was him went in that day. We'd found signs that Glasbury was at home—and we'd gone in, as it happened, just about two minutes after Glasbury'd gone out."

"Yes," said Glasbury; "after I'd found the body and gone out to telephone!"

"You know about that, friend; an' maybe this part of it has all been told before. What we didn't know was that frien' Glasbury was going to choose the same day, an' that for croakin' the dame!"

"I see," said Laneham; "and you still believe that Mrs. Fisher was killed by Mr. Glasbury?"

The man stared. "An' who else? Say, where you gettin' now?"

"Never mind about that. Go ahead and tell the rest."

"Well, once we was sure of that, an' once we'd learned from the papers that the jewel box was still waitin' too, we made up our minds to come again, an' keep a-comin'. No reason why frien' Glasbury shouldn't have callers every second night. We was both swell dressers, at that. So no need for him to be ashamed of us."

"Only, when it got out that it was a spook job, we decided that we'd have to spook it, too. That explains why Lotufo ghosted himself when he went in the night he got Hooley. No use denyin' he did. When he's had time to think it out, he won't deny it himself. An' what, you'll ask, did he belt him with? Why, there again we thought we'd play Mr. Glasbury into it. Since he'd hit Mrs. Fisher with somethin' leavin' a round, smooth hole about an inch across, that was the weapon to use in case another job'd have to be done in there. An', to make the weapon, all was needed was to do a little bendin' an' hot-forgin' on a pipe end. There you are again. You'll find that little golf-stick up in the dump we had in East a Hundred an' Twenty-ninth. Anything else you want to know about?"

INVOLUNTARILY Laneham turned away from the fellow.

But Judge Bishop was still unsatisfied. "I don't want to know any more about the later details, Laneham," he said. "But, as I understood it, you were going to tell us about that door?"

"If you care to," the Doctor answered, "in another hour I'll take you up and let you find it for yourself."

"Good," said McGloynne. "But, Doctor, that ain't what's holdin' me. As I understood it, at the start you were goin' to have this story told in its right an' regular order. If so, how was it you've left out the first thing of all? How did the guy get in that really did the job?"

"I'm having the story told in its regular order," Laneham replied. "Mrs. Fisher's murderer was never near her body, nor even near the pool, until hours after she was dead."

"In the name o' Gawd!"

"And I can best begin my explanation of that," the Doctor continued evenly, while they pressed about him, "by reminding you just who the murderer was."

To be concluded next week

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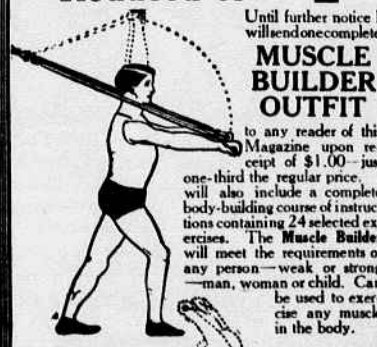
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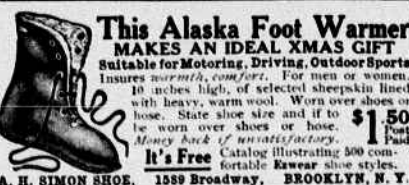
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